



MEETING MINUTES

Housing Authority of Mono County

Board of Supervisors Chambers

REGULAR MEETING

County Courthouse
Bridgeport, California 93517

January 15, 2008

1:42 p.m. Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Hunt

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

No one spoke.

- 1) **Approval of Minutes**
Special meeting of November 13, 2007.
M08-001 *(Farnetti/Hazard, 3-0; Bauer abstain, Reid absent)*
- 2) **Commission Member Reports**
The Commissioners gave no reports.
- 3) **Strategic Planning Introduction (Dewey Bandy, California Coalition for Rural Housing)**
ACTION: Conduct introductory strategic planning workshop with the California Coalition for Rural Housing, and provide any desired direction to consultant/staff.

Scott Burns introduced Dewey Bandy, Deputy Director of the California Coalition for Rural Housing. This is a non profit organization and they are prominent in this field. The purpose of today's meeting is to discuss the type of planning being sought by the Housing Authority, and consider a schedule for future meetings.

Mr. Bandy provided the following information and addressed questions:

- CCRH was formed in 1979 and is the oldest state-wide housing coalition, which is comprised of non-profit and public housing developers, and other agencies interested in rural housing. Their primary focus is to make sure the needs of the communities aren't neglected. There is a tendency at the state level to tailor programs for urban areas, which may exclude or harm rural communities.

- CCRH works on program and policy advocacy, and also does technical assistance work when requested. Bandy has worked in affordable housing for 30 years and currently leads the technical assistance programs. They don't operate as a traditional consulting firm; their approach is to work with the client, and adopt and change things as needed.
- The first training session being considered will review the basics of what housing authorities do, especially in rural areas, and what is being done inside and outside the state. He wants to understand the Board's conception of the Housing Authority, review what people are doing, and review what it will take to accomplish projects. Bandy wants to consider things being done currently that could be applied in Mono County—this may include urban settings as well as resort communities. Are there complimentary policies and programs, such as land trusts, that the County could utilize? They will consider how these will enhance the Housing Authority, and will consider implementation.
- This process will help identify where the Housing Authority is and where it wants to go, and will identify mechanisms needed to accomplish goals.
- A county may need to address a variety of housing needs and challenges that a city doesn't have to consider; a county also has a bigger service area. One challenge for a county is to articulate priorities; another challenge is to consider how the impacts of housing in one area may affect other communities (i.e. higher-end housing may force people to move to outlying areas, and housing investors may look for the next best place).
- A big part of the issue is to get affordable housing in both rental and ownership markets. There may be some things the Board can do with land use policies; they will need to consider strategies for acquiring land. Regarding second homeowners, there may be programs established to keep existing homeowners in place.
- Administration is a big part of a housing program, and the Housing Authority should do what makes sense. If affordable units are vacant, there is either a lack of need or a lack of proper administration. The County needs to decide if a Housing Authority is a good idea, and if so, needs to consider a workable strategy and how to utilize resources most effectively.
- There are models available to follow, but innovation is also valuable. Community education is part of addressing affordable housing needs. Some people don't understand affordable housing, and part of the strategy includes building consensus. Successful jurisdictions approach this issue with an entrepreneurial outlook. Mono County has a lot in place already.

Commissioners expressed a number of concerns and ideas:

- In many areas land is available, but the zoning, such as a minimum lot size, may prohibit development of affordable housing.
- Part of the problem may be community attitudes and lack of support for affordable housing.
- Most of the areas with a large land base are not near a job market so transportation becomes an issue.
- The Housing Authority should be a catalyst to make things happen, rather than building and managing housing. The Housing Authority should look for home-buyer assistance programs and ways to get middle income people into housing. The County could draw on the experience of Mammoth Lakes Housing, which has evolved from construction to maintenance and management.
- It would be worthwhile for Mr. Bandy to meet with each Board Supervisor individually to talk about their specific issues.
- The Commissioners agreed that they need help getting to the next level.

Pam Hennarty, Executive Director of Mammoth Lakes Housing, expressed her support for Mr. Bandy and for the County in their efforts to move forward. The Coalition does amazing work in the state and their work will bring a great amount of value to the Housing Authority. There are a variety of models and options available for consideration, and Bandy will bring ideas forward so the Board can make decisions. Mammoth Lakes Housing is also available to lend support. This is an issue facing not only Mammoth Lakes, but the region as a whole.

Kirk Stapp, Town of Mammoth Lakes and member of the Mammoth Lakes Housing board said implementation doesn't work unless there is a specific staff person available. Also, the Commissioners need to keep asking if ordinances and policies are working—are they addressing the needs that are out there? Monitoring is an issue to make sure housing stays affordable. June Lake will be critical because the County will have one chance to capture Intrawest; preservation is also critical. Even though Mammoth Lakes has a problem, it impacts the County; there is a need to deal with this issue on a regional basis. The planning staff can't address all the issues; one person needs to be dedicated to overseeing these issues. Lastly, making the political and budgetary commitment is important.

Chairman Hunt asked Mr. Bandy to start scheduling meetings and working on the issues.

The next meeting with Mr. Bandy will be in March.

- 4) **Crowley Lake Estates Update (Larry Johnston and Scott Burns)**
ACTION: Consider Crowley Lake Housing Company, LLC, request for financial concessions, and provide any desired direction to staff.

Scott Burns: Received a letter from the applicant for the Crowley Lake Estates project, which was approved 4-5 years ago, questioning the feasibility of the affordable housing requirement. California Housing Partnership Corporation concluded that it is feasible, based on a certain value of the land owned by the applicant. The developer disagrees and thinks a concession is needed to make the project work. Burns asked the Commission for direction.

Commissioners discussed the issue:

- Would like to consider options and bring the viewpoints together.
- The project brought forth by the developer was approved several years ago, so concessions are not warranted. Instead, the developer is welcome to bring back a different project for consideration.
- In answer to a question about water, Larry Johnston said a well has been constructed and drilled; the capacity and quality are reported to be adequate. Don't know yet how it affects neighboring wells. Believe this question is close to being resolved.
- Would like to see a financial estimate of the costs (to the County) to address the developer's requests.
- In answer to a question about the alternative plan, Johnston said the suggested plan fits in with the original plan that was approved by the Board; the developer is asking for assistance to help make the project happen. Scott Burns said there may be some grant opportunities available.
- Want to keep the workforce in the community. Asking to see another development plan.
- A subcommittee of Commissioners could sit down with staff and the developer to discuss options.

- The developer needs to understand that the Commission won't allow market-rate housing on parcels targeted for affordable housing.

Pam Hennarty, Mammoth Lakes Housing, said she did not think the project as proposed would be competitive since it is targeting households earning less than 60% of the area median income. Other models (such as duplexes or triplexes) could provide a win/win situation for the County and the developer; it is important not to give up on providing work-force housing on this site. The type of housing (how it looks) is important to how well it fits within an area. Also, targeting a higher income group might work better for this area.

Johnston said the plan never specified that the housing had to be a tax-credit project. The proposed units could be 80-100% of the area median income and stay within the affordable housing range (inclusionary housing goes up to 200% ami). Commissioner Bauer asked someone to talk to the developer to make sure he understands this.

Mr. Bandy suggested that the Commission consider the following:

- Affordable funding sources for this type of project; the location and service factors; and whether or not this project will be competitive—the proponent of the project should address this question.
- Affordable housing funding sources will place restrictions on those who occupy the units; this needs to be considered.

The Commission directed staff to schedule a meeting with the developer to review options to the current proposal; they asked staff to include Pam Hennarty in this meeting.

5) Housing Mitigation Timing for Subdivisions (Larry Johnston and Mark Magit)
ACTION: Conduct workshop regarding timing of housing mitigation requirements for subdivisions, and provide any desired direction to staff.

Larry Johnston: The question before the Commission is at what point in the development process should a developer be required to build inclusionary housing as specified in the ordinance? The ordinance states: "The on-site units and secondary dwelling units must be built at the same time as market rate units and a certificate of occupancy will not be issued as to any unit until the affordable unit(s) are completed and issued a certificate of occupancy." Staff is requiring the developer to build the housing first, but developers have been asking to build units later.

Mark Magit: Typical inclusionary housing ordinances envision a builder putting in 200-250 homes, and building affordable units in the tract. Mono County has required a subdivider (not the builder) to comply with the housing ordinance. The subdivider is only splitting up lots and installing infrastructure; the question is whether or not this affordable housing is to be considered another capital improvement, or should the subdivider be treated differently from the builder. The ordinance requires putting infrastructure in place, including housing. Staff would like direction from the Housing Authority to work through some of these scenarios.

Johnston: The thought has been that the housing should be built first because of NIMBYism—if it is built later, high-end owners would protest. The staff position has been that the workforce units are the responsibility of the subdivider, who would need to contract for this building the same as for the other infrastructure.

Regarding the White Mountain development, Commissioner Hazard said this development may not address affordable housing issues because people working in Mammoth aren't going to live there; this will be an affordable housing development for Inyo County. He suggested waiting to see the outcome of these housing units due to the issue of commuting. He expressed concern that the Commission isn't accomplishing what they hope to. If the affordable units are built up front but don't sell, vacant homes will negatively impact areas. The Commission needs to encourage down-payment assistance.

Commissioner Bauer agreed and suggested conducting a needs assessment. Chairman Hunt said location and needs must work together. Mr. Bandy said if affordable units remain vacant, the Commission needs to find out why. Regarding the question of whether or not to require constructing the units up front, most ordinances require this, but some allow building at a later stage. In this case, there should be strong incentives for the developer to build the units.

Johnston: White Mountain was approved before the ordinance; the affordable housing in this area will sell. In the future, he suggested restricting the sales price or selling the affordable units first. He wanted to make the Commission aware of this issue since staff has been working with a developer on an upcoming project.

ADJOURNED: 3:49 p.m.

The Housing Authority will meet in regular session on **March 11, 2008**, in the Board of Supervisors Chambers, County Courthouse, Bridgeport, California.

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